

‘Whose colour was not black nor white nor grey,
But an extraneous mixture, which no pen
Can trace, although perhaps the pencil may’:
Aspasie and Delacroix’s *Massacres of Chios*¹

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On 7 May 1824, twenty-six year old Delacroix put down his brush during the painting of the *Massacres of Chios* in order to write in his journal (plate 14). Pleased with the overall effect of the composition, he congratulated himself and tried to find words for the pictorial qualities he sought:

My picture is beginning to develop a torsion, an energetic movement that I must absolutely complete. I must keep that good black, that happy dirtiness, and those limbs which I know how to paint and few others even attempt. The mulatto will do very well.²

Like the torsion he noted in the picture itself, there is a climactic movement here across ‘good black’, ‘happy dirtiness’ and ‘those limbs’ to the ‘mulatto’ who seems to summarize or at least realize all those qualities. What, we might ask, is the ‘mixed’ progeny of white and black races doing at the centre of a picture depicting the revolt of Greeks against Ottoman rule? Why would Delacroix turn, in the midst of painting the Greek War of Independence, to the mulatto, the so-called *sang-mêlé* associated above all with the French colonies in the West Indies? Given that Greece was considered the very birthplace of a classical ideal inextricably aligned, in the French imagination, with marble whiteness, how can we account for Delacroix’s surprising choice to shuffle racial as well as geopolitical references within a work ostensibly supporting the Greek cause?

Although Delacroix’s journal entry is so startling as to remain unremarked in extant scholarship, it does not exceed the picture itself. At its centre, there is indeed a prominently displayed, monumental, dark-skinned male nude. ‘Mulatto’ is not an inaccurate way to suggest his brown tonalities but it is a racialized manner of conceiving skin colour that is deeply symptomatic of 1820s France. Why, we should wonder, did ‘race’ claim the body of the classical *académie* formerly aligned with modifiers like virtue and beauty? What pressures and what opportunities led an artist like Delacroix to metamorphose the ‘unmarked’ (white) academic ideal into a racially marked term, to turn, that is, the metaphorically and historically removed masculine ideals of a Leonidas or an Endymion into the



14 Eugène Delacroix, *Massacres of Chios*, 1824. Oil on canvas, 4.19 × 3.54 m. Paris, Musée du Louvre.

quotidian, contemporaneous, and marginalized person of 'mixed-blood'? And how did a growing if inchoate preoccupation with race impinge upon contemporary responses not only to Delacroix's painting but to the Greek revolt itself?

This paper will argue that Delacroix's written remark productively illuminates the peculiarity of a tableau that is as compelling as it is strange.³ Despite desires then and now to see *Chios* as evidence of the liberal philhellenic commitment to the Greek cause during their revolt against the Turks, Delacroix's canvas has proven singularly resistant to such simple ideological foreclosures. Viewers have not been able to avoid noting that the tableau's desultory, clotted composition undermines simple readings of virtue pitted against tyranny. Emptying out the composition's centre, refusing a confrontation between heroic protagonists, Delacroix impacts the foreground with a crumbling wall of morose and passive figures, many clinging together in pairs, who meagrely rise up the image's sides, only to be diminished by the oppressively high horizon of a vast and desolate landscape. To appreciate the picture's unanticipated strangeness, it is necessary at once to broaden the geopolitical horizon of its interpretation and to understand the extent to which pictorial processes and oil paint's materiality, its viscous substantiality, were implicated in the politics of French colonial history. If Delacroix's art has either been personalized as the material expression of his inner psychic dramas or broadly situated within historical events, this paper will argue that the painterly decisions of an insecure, sexually preoccupied young man were in themselves politically charged. The Parisian studio can also be a colonial space and painters can aspire to be colonists.

To begin to understand what was at stake in Delacroix's painting of a Turkish massacre of Greeks, it is necessary to reconstruct the complexity of the French response to the Greek revolt. Restoration France's support of the Greek cause during the 1820s has come to seem entirely predictable, primarily because of the prominence of classical Greece in the collective French imagination. Nonetheless, the gap between the antique past and the early nineteenth-century present complicated matters. What, after all, was the relation between ancient and modern Greece, between Greeks of the past and Greeks of the present?

For Royalists during the Restoration, the Greek revolt bore a dangerous resemblance to the French Revolution. That resemblance initially overrode other ways of construing the rebels as descendants of European civilization rising up against Ottoman barbarism, or even more problematically for the conservatives, as Christians revolting against Muslims. The dilemma for conservatives was perplexing and ultimately divisive. Should Royalists defend 400 year-old Ottoman rule against revolutionaries or champion Christianity against Islam? In the early 1820s the answers were far from self-evident, particularly given the insistent identification by Liberals with the Greeks. Although the Bourbon government would ultimately co-opt the Greek cause by reframing it as a religious rather than political struggle, in the years preceding the exhibition of Delacroix's painting, Frenchmen could identify as much with the Oriental as with the Hellene. Ultimately, all Frenchmen would rally on behalf of the Greeks for divergent – indeed oppositional – political reasons, but in the first years of the 1820s, the pressing question Frenchmen posed to one another was: 'Are you Greek or are

you Turk?⁴ At the beginning of the war, during the years that Delacroix planned and painted *Chios*, Frenchmen believed they had a choice.

Nonetheless, those persons who aligned themselves with the Greeks had a powerful advantage because of the centrality of classical culture to French self-fashioning. The Turks may have functioned as a beloved exotic object, but classical Greeks offered Frenchmen an authoritative term of identification as subjects. Those who argued for the legitimacy of Ottoman rule were therefore forced to reckon with their opponents' powerful equation of modern Greeks with the classical past. The simplest retort was to rehearse the by-then familiar refrain that the contemporary Greek bore no resemblance to his noble predecessor. By the 1820s there was a substantial body of travel literature in which the disparity between modern Greeks and the ancient people was lamented, the gap between peoples like antique ruins effectively serving to dramatize the Frenchman's profound sense of distance from that Utopian past.⁵ Here, for instance, is an 1800 travel account:

We seek the descendants of those heroes celebrated for their virtue in peace, for their valour and talents in war, and we find only a people enslaved, whose [brutalized] spirit has lost its ancient energy, who has all the vices of their ancestors without having its least virtue, whose arms have been enervated by inaction and need.⁶

Modern Greeks were barely recognizable, their character as well as their bodies bearing the imprint of their degradation. When another author anxiously lamented the deplorable degeneration of modern Greeks, she concluded 'Hope can remain with the vanquished as long as they have not mixed irretrievably with their vanquishers.'⁷ '*Mêles sans retour*': herein lay the fundamental question. Had the Greeks 'mixed' beyond retrieval? Yes, according to many. Indeed, it was only too easy to claim that there no longer existed a Greek people. For such authors, modern Greeks, long dominated by the empires of Romans, Slavs and Turks, bore no resemblance to the people of antiquity. Instead, they were a complex and confusing aggregation of different peoples with different religions and languages. This was the taunting refrain of an editorial in the press which dared a Grecophile to define who in fact the so-called Greeks really were:

Ask [the Philhellene] if it is really the Greeks who today people the greatest part of Greece. [Ask him] if ... the Arnautes, the Souliots, the Huns, the Bulgarians ... have descended from Leonidas, Miltiades and Themistocles. He will inform you whether Greek Muslims, unified Greeks, non-unified Greeks, and Jews form a homogenous people and [whether they] will live together in good intelligence when the terror of the Ottoman glove no longer unites them in common hatred of their oppressors.⁸

These pro-Ottoman arguments were well justified if self-serving. Under the Ottoman Empire, the population of Greece did indeed consist of numerous religious, linguistic and ethnic groups.⁹ Typically, one of the formidable tasks of the nationalist independence movement was to construct a modern Greek identity

for persons who belonged to different churches, who spoke a variety of languages; and who used neither the term Hellene nor Greek to describe themselves until the war.¹⁰ But if Greeks did not share religion, customs or language, what made them 'Greek' as opposed to, let us say, Albanian? Seeking inclusivity, the nationalist movement was flirting with lineage, that is, biological or 'racial' continuities. Did not the very notion of 'regeneration' or 'restoration' require a physical as well as historical continuity? But we have already witnessed the vulnerability of such claims to counter-arguments. The Ottoman Empire did not facilitate modern nationalist mappings; this was a land of geographically dispersed as well as overlapping minority groups: in Byron's words, 'The Turk, the Greek, the Albanian, and the Moor, Here mingled in their many hued-array.'¹¹

With its emphasis on disarray and the motley clustering of heterogeneous persons, Delacroix's painting hardly countered such attacks. Despite its purported philhellenic commitment, the *Massacres of Chios* does not propose that the Greeks constitute a homogenous and coherent people, nor does it clearly differentiate Greeks from Turks. By 1824, although the government's inaction still served as the butt of Liberal criticism, public opinion in support of the Greek cause had overwhelmed the pro-Ottoman voices of the early 1820s.¹² In this atmosphere, Delacroix's exhibition of a painting about the Greek war of independence could not have been better timed. But the growing philhellenic consensus also led to harsh criticism of the painting's ambiguities.

Art critics were quick to point out Delacroix's failure clearly to distinguish the Greeks from the Turks. The violation of Greek identity was read in explicitly aesthetic terms. Delacroix had made Greeks ugly. Few critics fail to mention the word *laideur*; indeed, ugliness was deemed the defining characteristic of his work. According to most of his contemporaries, this was the painter's mistake: 'Delacroix has failed to observe the truth when he attributes the characteristic of ugliness to the Greeks, who are still the most beautiful of known men.'¹³ Some critics even asserted that Delacroix had inverted the relative value of these peoples by rendering the Greeks more repulsive than the Turks: Delacroix's 'tableau of the Massacre of Chios makes you flee; the victims are more frightening than the torturers; it must have been commissioned by an enemy of the Greeks.'¹⁴

Delacroix's critics denounced his choice to render the Greek people ugly and repulsive. To do so in their eyes was to sacrifice their identity as the most noble and beautiful antique people. Their aesthetic alignment of beauty and Greekness was, however, insensitive to another Rousseauist political model of ethnic and cultural degradation.¹⁵ That the Greeks had been transformed after centuries of domination, few Frenchmen contested. But many argued on their behalf that the Greeks had been degraded not intrinsically as a race but politically as an enslaved people. It was slavery – political, economic and physical oppression – that had transformed the world's most beautiful people into a haggard, degraded remnant of their former selves. In the pre-revolutionary and revolutionary years, this argument had its political clout. Despotism, not climate, nor race, metamorphosed a people and their culture. Free them and they would become noble and physically ideal again. In a late 1780s travel account that Delacroix seems to have read, the author went so far as to argue that contemporary Turks not Greeks were now the embodiment of the noble *beau idéal*.

Everything contributes to strengthen the [Muslims'] bodies and prolong their vigour ... It is here that the sculptor, who loves his art and rivals the ancients must come to choose his models. [The Muslims] resemble antique statues, and surely it was from such models that the Ancients worked. You must be astonished that I have not spoken at all of the Greeks who live here and share with the Turks the advantage of [climate]; but they are oppressed – these unhappy persons have neither the elevated height, nor the strength, nor the beauty of the Muslims. Today weak and lazy, they live in degradation, and one reads on their face: they are slaves.¹⁶

This is familiar Enlightenment rhetoric but it is astonishing not the least for linking classical sculpture to contemporary Muslim men. Delacroix himself revealed a similar fascination with the Turk even as he determined to paint a tableau on behalf of the Greek cause. The young painter recounted in his journal that his acquaintance Colonel Voutier had been 'so much impressed by the magnificent head of a Turk who appeared on the battlements [in Athens] that he prevented a soldier from shooting him'.¹⁷ It was precisely that image of a handsome Turkish head rising up as though over the horizon of battle that Delacroix celebrated in his studies and final painting.

One could choose, therefore, to agree with the critic who believed that Delacroix's *Chios* simply inverted the relative beauty of Greeks and Turks. But what the Salon criticism generally failed to address was that ugliness in itself did not necessarily entail a pro-Ottoman position. Only one review, the most explicitly political outcry for support of the Greek cause, manifested a greater level of sophistication: of course the Greeks in Delacroix's painting are ugly, they are enslaved, this is the ugliness of agony and oppression not the ugliness of an inferior people.¹⁸ Ugliness is circumstantial and reversible, not definitive and absolute. This voice was, however, a minority position. In general, the critics were far more anxious about the Greeks in Delacroix's painting. Ugliness seems to have troubled them for overdetermined reasons.

Simply to interpret *Chios* as an inversion of the relative value of Greeks and Turks does not adequately address his contemporaries' disturbing apprehension that there was something more fundamentally, even internally and biologically wrong with Delacroix's Greeks. Indeed, to most critics, the figures appeared diseased. Rather than depicting heroically courageous if defeated rebels, Delacroix seemed to have painted a scene of plague.¹⁹ The majority of critics believed that he had made a mistake. For many it was an unforgivable one. Painting in the shadow of the glorious Napoleonic empire, Delacroix had chosen an inappropriate model: to numerous critics it was self-evident that the young painter was emulating Gros's *Bonaparte visiting the plague-stricken of Jaffa* of 1804 (plate 15), an epic Napoleonic machine depicting the young general touching giant half-naked French soldiers overcome by bubonic plague during the Egyptian campaign.²⁰

To argue that Delacroix painted Greeks like the oversized plague-stricken men dominating the foreground of Gros's painting was to propose that his Greeks appeared to be sick and internally corrupted rather than externally violated. Significantly, it was also to see them as orientalized – like Gros's Frenchmen



15 Antoine-Jean Gros, *Bonaparte visitant les pestiférés de Jaffa*, 1804. Oil on Canvas, 5.23 × 7.15m. Paris, Musée du Louvre

turned 'oriental'. I am interested in the verb here, 'turned' – the process of transformation. To see Delacroix's Greeks as plague-stricken persons become oriental as in Egypt, was to see those Greek bodies as the meagre corporal evidence of an invisible *metamorphosis* from one ethnic and cultural identity to another. To critics disturbed by Delacroix's painting, whether Liberal or Royalist, the Greeks appeared eerily changed, but in ways that resembled the internal corruption of disease not the external violation of warfare. Yet, while they seemed less Greeks than Turks, they nonetheless remained subordinate to the domination of that imperious opulent Turk rising up on his horse, the only figure to pierce the oppressive lid of the horizon. Were Delacroix's so-called Greeks neither one people nor another?

In the *Massacres of Chios* there is one vivid counterpoint to the disease model of cultural contact, one site of contrast rather than resemblance between oppressor and oppressed people: the eye-catching abduction scene on the right, in which the imperious Turk mounted on horseback seizes a writhing, naked woman as he combats a young Greek man who vainly tries to stop him. Here is the tableau's solitary scene of active violence and resistance. In this vignette, Delacroix offers the dramatic contrast between Turk and Greek sought by his dissatisfied critics: the beautifully ornamented, proud and imperious, dark-skinned Turkish male and the frontally displayed, sinuous and sensual, pale-skinned Greek female. Precisely where the painting celebrated the beauty of the

Turkish man, it also displayed the beauty of the Greek woman. Art critics recognized that the female nude was a showpiece of the painter's talent and skills. Her naked body was understood to be declaratively beautiful rather than ugly; for that reason she seduced rather than repulsed.²¹

To sum up thus far, the *Massacres of Chios* was understood by critics to offer two models of the Greek body: on the one hand, the majority of the figures were understood to be internally transformed, to be ugly and to repulse; on the other hand, the abducted woman was understood to be beautiful and to seduce. Although the rape scene has conventionally been identified with Delacroix's sadistic sexuality, I would argue that both models of the body were central to Delacroix's fantasy of domination, as well as his manifestly heterosexual working processes. Because first and foremost, Delacroix's painting must be seen to be idiosyncratically heterosexual in its syntax relative to the emphatically homosocial, exclusively masculine pictorial economies of the Davidian paintings that directly preceded it.

Coming of age during the Restoration, Delacroix experienced intensely the distance between himself and the artists who had given the earlier Revolutionary and Napoleonic epochs pictorial form. While painting *Chios*, Delacroix expressed a longing admiration not only for Gros's *Plague-Stricken of Jaffa* of 1804 but also for Girodet's *Revolt of Cairo* of 1810, as well as Géricault's later *Raft of the Medusa* of 1819 – all three, stormy epic history paintings representing colonial subjects; all three, exclusively masculine pictorial economies produced in the fraught homosocial atelier culture that characterized the school of David.²² Delacroix's repeated self-admonitions to paint Napoleonic subjects, learn Arabic and travel to Egypt accompanied expressions of envy for Gros, a man, in his words, lucky enough to live in an historical moment that matched his talents.²³ Delacroix's plaintive outcry 'Egypt! Egypt!' while recounting an evening of gossip around a Parisian billiard table aptly attests to the distance between the military exploits of Napoleonic empire and the sedentary nostalgia of the Restoration period.²⁴

Given this heightened sense of longing for masculine martial and artistic prowess, it is significant that Delacroix did not attempt to duplicate its homosocial milieu and masculine iconography, as did his contemporary Horace Vernet, for example.²⁵ Instead, the artist chose to redefine the studio, that former communal space of male sociability, as a private site for the sexual conquest of women. Delacroix's painting of *Chios* flagrantly advertises the return to heterosexual narratives not only in the theatrical rape scene on the right but in its prominent display of female bodies and insistent, indeed obsessive couplings. Bearing in mind the masculine artistic culture of the school of David, it is astonishing the extent to which Delacroix heterosexualized the formerly homosocial studio space as well as the act of painting. Not only did he repeatedly 'screw', to paraphrase his Italian slang (literally 'to key'), his working-class models, Emilie, Hélène, Laura, Sidonie, Zélie, among others, but he conscientiously recorded in his journal each sexual conquest, often its monetary cost and attendant emotional effects.

The young man who anxiously filled the pages of his journal conflated his heterosexual conquests with his pictorial processes in unsubtle ways:

Today I drew the head, chest etc. of the dead woman in the foreground. Again I made (slipping into Italian) my screw with my darling Emilie. It in no way dampened my enthusiasm. You have to be young for this kind of life. Everything is now painted in, except the hand and the hair.²⁶

In this passage, the unacknowledged oscillation between painted dead woman and the woman who modelled for her culminates in a return to the canvas as woman – after sex, ‘everything is now painted in, except the hand and hair.’ But the conflation of painting and sexual intercourse leaves unanswered their relation. If this passage implies that sex fuels painting, it also registers an anxiety regarding the need for youthfulness to sustain this regimen. Only the previous day Delacroix had been more forthcoming about his anxiety: when another model, Hélène, sat for the painting, he coyly admitted that ‘she unfortunately took away with her a part of my energy for the day.’²⁷ Hélène, it seems, robbed him of a fixed amount of energy: intercourse and painting competed for his finite resources. Where ultimately should his energy be spent? Did not the ‘virgin’ canvas of *Chios* more than the working-class model require his insemination, in his words, ‘all the juice in him’?²⁸ Had the artist not described the very surface of the painting as an encrusted and resistant ground requiring his penetration in order to bear fruit?²⁹

If Delacroix’s conflation of painting and copulation had permitted a fantasy of necrophilia, screwing a dead woman, it also offered the imaginary fiction of masculine generation. The tension was between death and life; sexual energy negatively spent or productively generative. Delacroix could describe sexual intercourse as a depletion of self, but he also consulted a doctor because of anxieties about impotency.³⁰ That this older medical man with a kind eye but reserved demeanour had participated in the Napoleonic military campaigns could only have heightened the young man’s unselfconscious notations of self-hate and alienation after his medical visit. Delacroix might worry that sex with women robbed him of the power to create, but he seemed reliant upon the repeated confirmation of virility in one sphere to assure its successful performance in the other. The self depleted was a source of anxiety but so too was the self incapable of dissemination, circulation or generation.

Heterosexual intercourse was Delacroix’s determining paradigm during the process of painting *Chios*. One witnesses its conspicuous rehearsal in the fantasy of rape on the right, and the artist’s identification with the Turk who seizes and rapes Greek women, women to be enslaved in the harem/studio space. Delacroix’s journal particularly privileges the long-worried process of painting that declaratively seductive and art-historically canonical Rubensian female body. During the week-long period of the most intensive work on the female nude, Delacroix daily mounted his model Emilie, noting each sexual act with fussy precision. But in a less apparent way, heterosexual copulation was also inscribed upon the tableau’s other prominent nude, the so-called mulatto, likened by many critics to Gros’s *pestiférés*.

We know that the Italian model Bergini sat for both the Turk on horseback and the supine Greek man, and that Delacroix’s French friend Pierret also modelled for the male nude at a late stage. There is no evidence that a mulatto



16 Eugène Delacroix, *Aspasie*, 1824. Oil on canvas, 81 × 65 cm.
Montpellier, Musée Fabre

posed for Delacroix's giant *académie*, but a so-called 'mixed blood' did indeed enter the space of Delacroix's studio while he was painting *Chios*. Her name was Aspasie and she was the model for a major life-size portrait, two small painted studies, and a couple of drawings (plates 16 and 17).³¹ Delacroix would keep all these pictures in his studio until shortly before his death and would describe the largest and most ambitious, knee-length portrait as a painting of Aspasie in his journal of 1857.³² That Delacroix found Aspasie a desirable sexual object is attested by the latter painting's seductive character, her demure but entreating gaze, her revealed shoulders and her full round breasts, a nipple protruding from the caressing folds of a white blouse. This iconography of the mulatta was hardly Delacroix's invention; we see that the colonist John Gabriel Stedman's passionate love object in Suriname, the mulatta Joanna, was depicted similarly: bejewelled, one breast exposed (plate 18).³³ Unlike Stedman, however, Delacroix was enacting a colonial encounter at home. A cryptic journal notation, again in Italian, states that he had had 'yet another' sexual episode with 'la nera'.³⁴ Aspasie would play a



17 Eugène Delacroix, *Aspasie*, 1824. Lead on paper, 13.4 × 21 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des arts graphiques



18 Joanna. Illustration for John Gabriel Stedman, *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam*, (1st ed. 1976). Engraving.



19 Eugène Delacroix, Study for *Massacres of Chios*, 1824. Watercolour and lead on paper, 40 × 30 cm. Paris, Musée de Louvre, Département des arts graphiques.

somnolent role at the foot of the bed in Delacroix's later lurid harem fantasy, the *Death of Sardanapalus* of 1827, but she was also incorporated into his painting of the Greek war of independence.

A glance at Delacroix's most elaborate preparatory sketch for *Chios* suggests that the expiring ostensibly Greek male nude began as Aspasie, the woman of mixed blood (plate 19). The watercolour repeats the large portrait's tilted downward-looking head, and the fullness of breasts protruding above white cloth. Of course, the breasts are meant to be the man's shoulder and chest, his torso



20 Eugène Delacroix, Detail of *Massacres of Chios*, 1824. Oil on canvas, 4.9 × 3.54 m. Paris, Musée de Louvre.

partly covered by the sweeping diagonal of black cloth, like Aspasie's mane of black hair, but Delacroix had not yet completed the metamorphosis of mulatta into male *académie*. This is a decidedly hybrid character, not only the 'mixing' of black and white races, but both mulatto and mulatta, both bearded and breasted. In the final painting, the supine figure subtly registers its history in the bulging prominence of the man's chest, two brilliant red nipples seeming to burst the taut skin which strains in its effort to repress the return of breasts (plate 20). His face too is the face peering out of the Montpellier painting with its low forehead, heavy, arched eyebrows, deep lidded eyes, long nose and full, slightly pursed lips. Shared too is the bent hand, limply held in a cradle of white cloth. The reclining *académie* condenses Aspasie's necklace and striped skirt into the patterned scarf loosely encircling his neck; her white blouse teasingly drops to his pelvis, at once veiling his genitals and heightening the erotic charge of his swelling hip and conjoined inner thighs.

Momentarily putting aside her sex change, admittedly much to ask, I would like to begin by considering what Aspasie represented to Delacroix. Understood as the progeny of a white and a black, a literal mixing of two bloods, the mulatta's body, unlike a white body, was inscribed by a narrative of heterosexual intercourse. In French thinking of the time, she was not an originary identity but a consequence of the sexual conjoining of two foundational and mutually incompatible terms, black and white. An eighteenth-century governor of Guadeloupe, for instance, had castigated mulattoes as 'vile ... children of the most detestable debauchery, a sort of monster always composed of the knavery of the two colours'.³⁵ As this statement attests, the mixed-blood was also understood to embody illicit sexual activity, between races moreover with disproportionate power. The mulatto was most typically construed as the offspring of the white

male colonist and black female slave.³⁶ Because tabooed, the person of 'mixed blood' was understood to result from inordinate desire.

The product of violent passions incited by the hot and sensual 'torrid zones',³⁷ *sang-mêlés* were, in the words of the early nineteenth-century naturalist and racial theorist J.J. Virey, a disturbingly 'ambiguous caste, without rank, without a fixed state'.³⁸ Half-black, half-white, one could interpret them either as a combination of the worst or best features of both races: that is, pejoratively, as having 'neither an intelligence as perfect as whites nor the laborious submission of negroes', or, alternately and admiringly, as being more physical and sensual than whites, more intellectual and civilized than blacks.³⁹ Whether conjoining the worst or best mattered little, it seems. The result was a powerful, sensual physicality wed to civility and a moderate intellect, a combination, of course, both frightening and profoundly seductive.

Indeed, the ardour that brought mixed-bloods into being was understood to determine their character: mulattas were the ultimate courtesans. In France, these women's seductive sensuality had been the subject of both novels and poems.⁴⁰ Moreau de Saint-Méry's well-known and authoritative description of Saint-Domingue,⁴¹ teased readers with the indescribability of their superlative erotic talents:

The entire being of a mulatta is devoted to voluptuousness and the fire of this goddess burns in her heart and only flickers out with her life. This cult is her code, all of her desire, all of her happiness. There is nothing the most inflamed imagination can conceive, that she has not predicted, intuited, accomplished. To charm all the senses, to surrender them to the most delicious ecstasies, to suspend them by the most seductive ravishments, here is her unique study; and nature, in some way, complicitous with pleasure, has given her charms, allure, sensibility and that which is much more dangerous, the talent for trying her hand at greater delights than even her partner could equal. She knows pleasures of which not even the code of Paphos contains all the secrets.⁴²

Delacroix was not the young man to resist such oft-repeated promises, no matter how hackneyed. Here was a tropicalized variant of the *odalisques* he collected in his atelier harem space, but the mulatta was also more complicated than the white working-class model. She embodied a colonial narrative to which Delacroix, closeted in his Parisian studio, had no other access. When Delacroix sexually dominated the mulatta Aspasie he sought entrée – in his Italian construction, 'a key' – to the illicit and geographically remote union of male colonist and female slave. In one sense, he played the colonist at one remove, re-enacting that man's sexual intercourse with the dark-skinned native woman. Delacroix was a man with worries about his own racial purity. He later admitted his youthful anxieties regarding the disgrace of his 'yellow complexion' and 'the shape of his nose', but through Aspasie, the painter belatedly performed the colonist's whiteness.⁴³ But 'screwing' a mulatta also enabled Delacroix to achieve intimate contact with the man of empire even as he mimicked him: Napoleonic officers like his doctor and his older brothers, or even the painter Gros, those adventurous figures unlike

himself who travelled to foreign lands and left their potent trace upon the conquered peoples. If Delacroix's writings attest to a barely sublimated desire for a number of his male friends, they also evidence, on more than one occasion, the artist's recourse to the intimacy between men achieved through shared female sexual objects.⁴⁴ Like the nude woman who justified the disassembling contact between Greek and Turkish man on the right of *Chios*, Aspasie fantasmatically conjoined Delacroix and the colonist whose procreative power she represented.

But why, in this case, does *Chios* prominently feature an eroticized mulatto and not a mulatta? I think the way to begin to answer the question is to appreciate the sheer force of an art-historical rather than psycho-social imperative. Delacroix, competing with the giants who preceded him, needed to paint his own martyred *académie* like David's *pestiféré* in *St Roch*, like Gros's in *Jaffa*, like Géricault's suffering young men: this was the inherited testing ground for proving one's authority. It is not an overstatement to say that the *académie* was quite literally a requirement for an ambitious young male artist in 1824. But for this painter, who defined his art in terms of the conquest of women, the *académie*, that emblem of the former world of eroticized homosociability, required rewriting. In Delacroix's working process, the male object of desire was born as a mulatta. Delacroix initially painted the plague-stricken man, the man disempowered and metamorphosed, as a woman in whom the powerful white male was embedded, but at one remove. Initially as he prepared his sketch, the homoerotic appeal of the white self was sublimated. Even the final painting's mulatto *académie* would bury the seduction of the white Frenchman, men like the painter's friend Pierret, who modelled for the male nude and to whom in 1820 Delacroix had gushed: 'Isn't this like a letter from a mistress to her lover, or vice versa? How crazy we are.'⁴⁵ Pierret was, it seems, sequestered within Aspasie never overtly to surface again. The body of Aspasie arguably rescripted the entire triad of relations featured on the right of *Chios*; she did so because she, unlike white and black persons, was understood already to embody that narrative.

The mulatta incarnated empire; she was its sign because she was its product. She was also, of course, the material vestige of the risks of heterosexual conquest: miscegenation and the sullyng of whiteness. There is plenty of evidence to substantiate that, from the mid-eighteenth century, many Frenchmen, particularly in the colonies, were increasingly hostile to the degradation of their race by miscegenation.⁴⁶ One statement from an eighteenth-century colonist summarizes this trend not only in discourse but legislation: 'Surely no one will make us desire the incorporation and the mixing of Races? It is thus that individuals, families [and] Nations become altered, debased, and that they dissolve.'⁴⁷ In the racist reactionary days of the Consulate, the formula was often repeated:

Alas! this blood is only too mixed in the colonies, and this corruption only too overwhelmingly spreads across all the parts of France. A little more, and this melange, already too common, will even denature the character of the nation, and we will see, if I can express myself like this, mulattos in morality as well as physique.⁴⁸

In 1814 another author went so far as to lay blame at Aspasie's door in Paris: 'Not

only have women of colour destroyed little by little the genius of white nations who receive them, but they considerably alter the physique of these nations.⁴⁹

Here then was a contradiction. The Mulatta was associated with the powerful force of procreation – she seemed utterly, dangerously, fecund, spawning in a swelling momentum an ever-greater progeny – but also with the degeneration and the death of nations. That mixed-blood persons inspired antithetical theories regarding their fertility and sterility during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries attests to the paradoxes they embodied: as materialization of past sexual intercourse, as promise and threat of perpetual procreation, as spectre of the transformation and imminent loss of cherished collective (racial and national) identities.⁵⁰ If *sang-mêlés* were sterile (like mules), they could not sustain their population but required the repeated crime of sexual intercourse between blacks and whites to bring them into being, but if they were fertile, interracial mixing ended not with a single generation but continued ad infinitum, thereby menacing the pure races that had first given them birth. Significantly, both theories linked the *sang-mêlé* to incessant tabooed intercourse, to procreation and to death. It was difficult for Frenchmen to sort out their response to this mix of titillating and imperilling associations: J.J. Virey, for example, produced an incoherent account in which he at once celebrated the admirable, indeed exemplary beauty and virile strength of *sang-mêlés* – describing them as standards of beauty to which mixes of persons from different French provinces could aspire – and lamented that modern European nations had become less robust and vigorous due to too much ‘confusion’ of peoples; warning that ‘morality is perverted in proportion with these mixtures’.⁵¹

The mulatta’s very appeal was inscribed by these paradoxical associations. To describe her status as ambiguous is insufficiently precise; rather she was conceptually and aesthetically confounding. If most racial theorists, including Virey, hierarchized peoples according to their beauty – Greek beauty, in Virey’s appalling illustration, contrasted to the monkey-like visages of blacks (plate 21) – the *sang-mêlé* combined traits in ways that potentially undermined the hierarchy itself. The mulatto might seem perfectly to support a hierarchical gradation by offering a median term, Gobineau’s ‘mediocrity in every way’, but what if the ‘mixed-blood’ instead of blending white and black into a symbolically median (grey) tone (lesser than white, better than black) perversely asserted their simultaneity – their coexistence – the ‘monstrosity’ of being ‘always composed of the knavery of the two colours’?⁵²

Consider the truism, here rehearsed in 1825: ‘Of the mix of white and black blood is born a new species of men designated by the name *men of colour*’⁵³ and appreciate the sheer non-referentiality and irrationality of its terminology. The problems posed by the *sang-mêlé* are amply demonstrated by the disjunction between the claims of racial designations to material veracity and their volatile metaphoricity. White and black might seem a simple enough opposition but the term ‘mixed-blood’ not only required a purely semiotic conjuration of invisible as well as unimaginable substances called white and black ‘bloods’ but also catalysed the eruption of an unanchored and unspecified ‘colour’ open to endless speculation. Given that persons could not be imagined as ‘grey’, the mixing of black and white races invited nonsensical conclusions with neither scientific nor aesthetic foundation: black and white makes yellow, or black and white makes red, or



21 *Espèces. Blanche; Nègre Ebœ; Orang (Singe)*. Illustration for Julien-Joseph Virey, *Histoire naturelle du genre humain*, Paris, 1824 (1st ed., 1801). Etching.

black and white makes brown.⁵⁴ The nomenclature for race was dependent upon categories of colour but rather than securing referentiality, such terminology proved remarkably inadequate to material description, the most self-evident proof of the elusive resistance of 'mixes' to conceptual, legal and classificatory control.⁵⁵

When, for example, John Stedman attempted to describe the appearance of his beloved mulatta Joanna in 1797, he foregrounded both the coexistence of the (blended) modification of racially typological features and a range of (non-blended) colours. While Joanna's nose was 'rather' small, her lips 'a little' prominent, the colours of her face were discrepant and variable: her eyes were black, but in her cheeks 'glow'd, in spite of her olive Complexion, a beautiful tinge of vermillion when gaz'd upon' (significantly, the white man's gaze here precipitates a momentary visibility of the mulatta's internal whiteness – she fleetingly shares the colour of white women's blushes).⁵⁶ What we witness here is the ill-fit between two visual

codes for racial identification: physiognomy and 'complexion'. Reliant on contour, particularly profiles, physiognomic typologies promised the certitude and quantifiable clarity of line, seen, for instance, in Virey's rehearsal of the mathematic formulations of Camper's facial angles. By the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the physiognomic features of blacks and whites were sufficiently codified to render predictable the result of their amalgamation. In an early version of today's morphing, one only had to imagine the modification of 'white' contours so that they resembled 'a little' those of 'blacks' (and vice versa). By contrast, the mixed-blood's skin colour remained relatively uncertain and outside taxonomic discipline. Despite their obsessive specificity, charts of racial mixes like Moreau de Saint Méry's, in their sheer abstraction, were remarkably uninformative about what such persons looked like. If physiognomy flaunted the absolute clarity of the bounding, dividing, circumscribing line, 'complexion' was reliant upon the most famously unpredictable and wayward pictorial category, colour. In representations of racial mixing like Stedman's description of Joanna, colour remained a particularly fluid, volatile, and creative site of experimentation – permitting successions, for example, of black, olive and vermillion. If facial features could promise (an illusory) fixity of contour, colour above all underscored the extraordinary mobility and ambiguity of the *sang-mêlé*. 'Always composed of the knavery of the two colours' when applied to persons suggests an impossible simultaneity of unlike physical attributes in which, significantly, colour played the central destabilizing role.

The *sang-mêlé* thus posed basic questions about 'mixing' – was it, for instance, a seamless continuity or a disparate contiguity? Was the mixed-blood a blend, as in lips only 'a little prominent,' or was it two races at once, both one colour and another in some kind of adjacency or temporal cycle, or did Stedman's evaluation point to another even more chaotic possibility, that the mulatto was a blend here but a contiguity there, and therefore a baffling, endlessly unpredictable, variability? The desirability of the mulatta arguably resided in her very instability of identity, the contradictory coexistence of attributes which invited, perhaps demanded, a stunning range of subjective response and ceaseless acts of interpretation. Take, for example, the case of Fortunée Hamelin, one of the notoriously fashionable women of Directory and Napoleonic Empire. A 'creole' like Josephine Bonaparte, Madame Hamelin was in the words of her husband, 'Brown to the point of making one doubt the purity of her blood, with the most beautiful eyes in the world and a large mouth'.⁵⁷ If some contemporaries were less flattering and more explicit, describing her as 'small, black, fat, with a large head, a negro's nose' or 'fat, black and ugly', others were compelled to acknowledge an appeal born of paradox: she was 'ugly and delicious, of all the women the most daring, one could say a girl escaped from a seraglio', or 'Her figure was a mixture of agreeable and defective traits, where the ugly perhaps dominated; however from this resulted an assured seduction and [a] triumph... often obtained over perfect beauties....'⁵⁸ Clearly, Madame Hamelin was not understood to be situated between white and black nor securely between beauty and ugliness or attraction and repugnance. Rather than a median blend, she was a magnificent inexplicable contradiction. Racial theories like Virey's could not account for her desirability.

There are other examples. In 1806, the rabidly pro-slavery colonist Cornillon offered an interlude to his racist diatribe in an ode dedicated to a *sang-mêlé*, a quadroon named Angélique:

Your lips are they less fine?
 But what more precious repose is offered to desire?
 Sweet, humid, purplish
 That on these cushions one forgets oneself to pleasure!⁵⁹

Characteristically, colour does a lot of work in this passage. 'Purplish' both offers a deviant colouristic alternative to white and black, and evokes a desirable, bruised erogenous zone, at once the interiority of the cushioned harem space and the body's orifices. No matter that Cornillon repeats Virey's assertion that female quadroons betrayed their blackness through the violet colour of their mouths and vaginas.⁶⁰ Despite its scientific pedigree, colour in Cornillon's *Ode*, as in Stedman's description of Joanna, destabilizes the black–white binary as well as the relative certainty of physiognomic features. Angélique's lips are not 'fine'. Not, that is, traditionally beautiful (we imagine Kurtz's blanched beloved), but for that very reason, they offer a place redolent in the seduction of colour and the promise of pleasure's forgetfulness. Miscegenation seems not only to have imperilled France with a corrupted, mixed and denatured population, but, like the unreasoned emotionalism of colour itself, to have menaced its purportedly rational aesthetic categories. Miscegenation, in Cornillon's poem as in the responses to Madame Hamelin, secreted the irrationality of desire.⁶¹

To paint the mulatta in 1820s France was therefore to confront a representational challenge requiring considerable improvisation. Delacroix seems to have relished the opportunity; quickly, one surmises, executing at least five pictures and drawings – works whose brief was to represent figures that would appear, in Werner Sollors's words, 'neither black nor white, yet both' (plates 16 and 22).⁶² Significantly, however, in the three painted portraits, Delacroix produced persons whose resemblance to one another is so attenuated as to cause a great deal of art-historical confusion. For over a century, scholars have debated whether the three canvases portray the same woman and have assigned the sitters a variety of proper names as well as racial identities, 'Aspasie, la mulâtre', 'Aline, la mulâtre', 'Aspasie, la mauresque'. While the figures in all three works share heavily lidded eyes, prominent thick eyebrows, slightly pursed full mouths, low foreheads and recessive almost dimpled chins, their skin colour, noses and eyebrow colour vary greatly; bodily differences compounded by the variety of background colours, lightings, hairstyles and dress (although two share the revelation of a rising orb of a nipple). If the large finished portrait, securely identified as Aspasie by the artist's later journal notation, suggests a handsome, bold woman of fairly dark complexion, with a relatively long and straight nose, the small picture with a deep red background emphasizes the paler, warmer, yellow tones of a sitter whose rounded nose is comparatively small and whose tilted head, lower position, and awkward assumption of fashionable French clothing and coiffure suggest a certain deference and humility, perhaps even subordination (or is it boredom?). Given the latter crimson painting bears an inscription by Delacroix's cousin Léon Riesener naming the sitter as 'Aspasie', the confusion in identification seems to me indicative of an experimental breadth of execution on the part of the artist who clearly sought out dramatically different pictorial and colouristic effects – Aspasie's skin, luminous and golden, against red



22 Eugène Delacroix, *Aspasie*, 1824. Oil on canvas, 27 × 21.5 cm. Private collection.

and Aspasie's skin, dark red-brown, charcoal grey and creamy peach, against black, but also against her blouse's white. Delacroix was enjoying the malleable, unprescribed colouristic possibilities afforded by the *sang-mêlé*. This is not to imply that the artist was free of all templates but that those templates were so inadequate, partial and contradictory as to require a great deal of improvisation, which the painter embraced rather than avoided. Certain passages do suggest that Delacroix may have been alert to theories like Virey's. Most dramatically, there is a shared preoccupation with the betraying darkness of the *sang-mêlé*'s genitals and orifices, manifested in Delacroix's large portrait by the strangely emphatic deep umber brown of the near armpit which fans out, like the incessantly conjured 'stain of blackness', to meet the lightest skin, a riveting black anus deeply embedded within a luminous, variably coloured expanse of flesh.

But if the mulatta offered the painter opportunities for pictorial experimentation, that experimentation has frustrated viewers seeking the consistent, unambiguous

racial identities upon which the mulatta's very individuality (1/2 black, 1/2 white? 1/8 black, 7/8 white?) could seem to rely. (In the befuddled, spiralling pursuit of racial fixity, determining whether the sitter was a moor or a mulatta or, paler yet, a quadroon, could seem to determine whether she was Aspasie or Aline or someone else, this despite the lack of corroborating evidence other than Delacroix's pictures themselves.) Moreover, to paint rather than to draw or write about the mulatta was also to demonstrate that the theoretical bifurcation of racial description into physiognomy's line and complexion's colour failed to correspond to the complexity of visual experience in which colour and form interact variably within a differentially lit field. The brilliant orange-reds of Aspasie's lips in the large portrait, for example, suggest but also obscure their precise contours, especially where red meets an equivalent value of brown in the shadows. If, in *Don Juan* (1819–24), Byron had suggested that the visual artist's pencil might be better able to 'trace' the 'wondrous hideousness' of figures 'Whose colour was not black nor white nor grey, But an extraneous mixture', Delacroix's colour-loaded brush proved the feat necessarily resistant to fixity, necessarily sensitive to the perpetuity of optical contingency.

'The mulatto will do very well.' We can by now begin to glimpse why young Delacroix would find the *sang-mêlé* a productive and generative model for his self-consciously transgressive art. But to bring the trope of the mixed-blood into intimate relation with the Greek War of Independence was an explosive move, given contemporary anxieties regarding the 'purity' and coherence of modern Greek identity. Delacroix's journal entry is not an encrypted secret about *Chios*; instead it bespeaks a set of interests realized within the tableau itself. The hostility so famously garnered by Delacroix's picture attests both to the currency of preoccupations with racial degeneration in 1820s Paris and to the ways Delacroix managed to make such threatening metamorphosis visible on his canvas. The critical preoccupation with ugliness – a term central to racial as well as aesthetic hierarchies – and plague, that is, biological corruption, belies such anxieties. Additionally, numerous critics betrayed an awareness that mixing, not inversion, was the disturbing tale told by Delacroix's tableau. Listen, for instance, to the critic for *Le Mercure du Dix-Neuvième Siècle*:

I felt repulsed, not by the horrors of the subject, but by the hideous aspect of the painting. Cadavers already marked by the imprint of destruction and the livid colour which announce the second stage of death busy disfiguring them; living bodies which resemble the cadavers, a poor even degraded nature ... faces either burned by the sun like Africans, or soiled, with that species of colour, dirty, yellowed and sombre resulting from old age, suffering and above all the long habit of distress. Why [does he make it] more hideous with touches of colour that are not united nor given any harmony?⁶³

Entertaining both a climatic and institutional model of degeneration, the reviewer believes that nature in Delacroix's painting has been degraded either like Africans by the sun or from duress. But note that mixing in the sense of blending is not what is seen in Delacroix's painting. Instead, this critic like others understood Delacroix's heavy-handed application of discrete passages of colour as

heterogeneity, the inharmonious crowding of different skin colours. Listen to the reviewer for *Le Globe*:

[Delacroix] has affected a boldness of colour and touch. He has made, almost without motive, some bodies green, others yellow, others red-brown; he has opposed the most different complexions. He has dispersed the light for fear of concentrating it according to ordinary convention. He has expanded across his tableau an entirely voluntary crudity.⁶⁴

Or, the *Constitutionnel*:

Finally, it is not necessary rudely to juxtapose so many colours, to oppose yellow bodies to blue bodies without any other motive than to establish a combat of effects.⁶⁵

Or *L'Oriflamme*:

His touch is sometimes vigorous and warm; it is more often dry, hard, clashing, his colour, green, yellow, red, grey and all this mixed in the driest manner and in the clearest tones; finally, his complexions announce in anticipation decay and dissolution, which further contributes to the odious character of this spectacle.⁶⁶

Or more ambivalently, the pamphlet *Une Matinée au salon*:

These touches that one sees from a hundred feet, and that I count from here without glasses, these dry and angular forms, these petrified arms and legs are the certain marks of virile genius. All these decayed complexions, all these shadows mixed with red give the painting the sinister aspect required to make us shudder.⁶⁷

These critics were emphasizing colouristic clashes, lack of harmony, and the dispersal of unified lighting into a scattering of contrasting passages of pigment. Their observations were not wrong. Delacroix repeatedly flaunted the differences between the Greeks' skin colours, for instance, in the incestuous pairing of light and dark naked adolescents on the far left. Against the frontal boy's eerily blanched, moon-like face, Delacroix squeezes a tawny profile, only to disconcert our attempt to read their bodies' physical disposition by making the paler figure's lower body at once awkwardly low, oversized, shadowed and differently hued. Delacroix was not simply varying the skin tones of different figures, he was disrupting the single body into disparate passages of colour. Most simply, reds pulsate among his protagonists like a materialized current; *reflet* – reflected light – doubling sometimes as bodily liquid, rivulets of blood; sometimes as open wounds. But, in addition, entire parts of bodies, particularly in shadow, disassemble into discrepant patches of opaque pigment. Look, for instance, at the way a muddy and opaque brown is applied like a mask to the face of the man whose naked back is turned towards us. Look too at the crude simplification of the *académie*'s shadowed foot into deep brown and bright

red lines, a monumental volumetric body withering into a set of two-dimensional streaks. In such passages, skin colour seems arbitrary and mobile, an aggressive if aimless and desultory traveller across bodies. Note as well Delacroix's pleasure in depicting the jaundiced dead woman's clenched, draped hand as a disturbingly blackened, flayed fist.

The young painter had not simply represented the Greeks as a miscegenated people, blended into another definable amalgam over centuries of domination. He had depicted them as an oddly heterogeneous aggregation of members. In the patchy papillotage of Delacroix's colourism, skin colour seemed in over-determined ways to be random and discrepant. The critic for *La Semaine* recognized the problems posed by Delacroix's technique:

His colours are often too lively in the shadows where all the tones should be undone . . . In the best coloured figures, one sometimes regrets the absence of those delicate colours, those intermediary tones that only the scrupulous study of the live model can indicate . . . Lastly M. Delacroix should sense that in giving the majority of his figures an almost similar colour, it is far easier to produce a harmonious ensemble.⁶⁸

The writer puts it bluntly: academic pictorial harmony was better achieved by figures who were the same colour. Harmony, furthermore, must be achieved not only among bodies but within them. The traditional transparent glazes so masterfully deployed by David had articulated the volume of the body as well as skin's colouristic variability whilst maintaining its unity, its equivalence, its seamless continuity. When Delacroix replaced the transparent layering of intermediary tones with the application of thick and discrete brushstrokes of opaque, often high-keyed pigment, he not only effected a different pictorial economy but imperilled the classical body's unity – the Greek body's coherence.

In *Chios*, the racial identity of the Greeks had not simply been changed. Rather, like 'mixed-bloods', they had no such coherent identity – they were diverse, atomized, not one group but a happenstance array of bodies' parts, so many patches of dirtied colour, mixing perhaps, but ad infinitum and without final unification, without blending. If mixing there was, it was still in progress. That Delacroix claimed to be representing the descendants of the ancient Greeks only made his figures' lack of visual coherence and unification all the more unacceptable to critics, especially those in favour of the Greek cause. It is no coincidence that the newspapers most vociferously protesting the paint handling and *laideur* of *Chios* were the leading philhellenic organs in 1824.⁶⁹ Delacroix was making visible the recently repressed arguments that the Greeks were no more than a pot-pourri of peoples: Slavs, Albanians, Turks, Arnautes and so on. For these philhellenic critics, Delacroix's Greeks were an aesthetically repugnant accumulation of persons, parts and pigments in utter disarray.

The reputed ugliness of Delacroix's Greeks may have promoted anxiety about racial degeneration, but the site of beauty was, of course, no less troubling. In *Chios* the beautiful Greek woman was the seductive woman who inspired rape – that foundational narrative of the mixing of peoples. In his account of the war,

Delacroix's acquaintance Colonel Voutier lamented the tragedy of Greek women's desirability.

[The Turks] abuse without scruple all women who fall into their hands ... If these women don't have [children], they remain forever slaves ... The brutality of the tyrants is such that the Greeks are obliged to go to church before daylight, so that their women are not seen by the Turks ... Charms and graces are for these young girls fatal gifts of nature and for their families the sources of eternal suffering. Fathers are reduced to hoping for them ugliness and deformities.⁷⁰

For Delacroix to align Greeks with ugliness was to imply their transformation, but to identify them with female beauty was to invite the imaginative reenactment of their violation. Delacroix's introduction of women into the frame of Napoleonic Orientalist painting had changed its implications. If Girodet's *Revolt of Cairo* of 1810 had offered a frenzied celebration of the contact between men of discrete races, Delacroix's *Chios* foregrounded the consequences of the heterosexual as opposed to homosocial mixing of peoples. Whether ugly and already changed or beautiful and about to be violated, Greeks had proven to be subject to the risks of procreation – their discrete and unified identity was undone. Sexual interchange would leave its dirtied residue.

This was, in fact, what attracted Delacroix to the subject. If, for Delacroix, heterosexual conquest could risk the depletion of his resources, it could also promise procreation, art as generativity, the material traces of an obsessive replay of sexual unions. When, in his journal, he described his dying *académie* as a mulatto, he commented upon its special fertile character. Let's hear him once more: 'I must keep that good black, that happy dirtiness, and those limbs which I know how to paint and few others even attempt. The mulatto will do very well. I must get fullness. If it is less natural, it is more fecund and beautiful.'⁷¹ Rather than reiterating either of the antithetical theories concerning the sterility or fertility of *sang-mêlés*, Delacroix revels in the oxymorons they enable. Progeny of illicit racial conjoinings, the mulatto was simultaneously 'less natural', particularly, one might add, in a painting of Greeks, *and* fertile and beautiful.

For Delacroix, transformation remained the issue but rather than being negatively construed as degeneration, as in *Jaffa*, his heterosexual paradigm of creation recast metamorphosis as the productive if 'less natural' spawning of difference, variety and visual interest. In *Chios*, *Jaffa*'s narrative of the Frenchman turned oriental was rewritten as miscegenation. Gros's painting had proposed that Europeans in contact with the colonized Other were fundamentally, frighteningly transformed. Delacroix's painting seized that narrative of colonial metamorphosis and re-coded it as heterosexual domination. Miscegenation afforded not only an alternative colonial narrative of heterosexual empowerment but a pictorial set of opportunities, the sheer drama of colour's variability.

The *sang-mêlé* was, for Delacroix, a crucially generative trope, affording his picture-making both colour and blackness, both flesh and dirt, the paradox of Madame Hamelin's seductive ugliness, the contradiction of his mulatto's 'good black', 'happy dirtiness', and 'unnatural fecundity'. But *Chios* is not solely a



23 Louis-Léopold Boilly, Detail of *Galleries of the Palais Royal*, 1809. Oil on canvas. Paris, Musée Carnavalet.

purposive ugliness. How could an audience feel sure of a tableau rife with such paradoxes? *Chios* registers the pressures of a series of conflations that were at once psychosexual, pictorial and colonial. Delacroix's giant male nude is, let me remind you, a Greek man who resembles a Turk, who resembles a plague-stricken Frenchman, who resembles an Arab, who resembles an African burnt by the sun, who resembles a mulatta named Aspasie. The strangeness of Delacroix's move was his incorporation of so many discrepant geopolitical references and so much colonial history into a single body, in contrast, for example, to Louis-Léopold Boilly's multi-figure cast in the corner of an 1809 painting of Parisian prostitutes (plate 23). Imagine compressing all Boilly's figures from the Parisian sex trade into a single nude and you appreciate the peculiarity of Delacroix's choice to rely on a mulatta (in drag) rather than discrete typologies.

The Greek War of Independence was seized by liberal Frenchmen because it offered an allegory for their own fraught revolutionary history. Delacroix too found the Greek revolt the subject most capable of vividly representing France's glorious conflicted past. But for this Restoration painter wistfully emulating the

picture of productive – and racist – contradictions; it is also a painting which seems, like the mulatta in French imaginings, quezily to sequester a secret. In Delacroix's tableau, women re-enter heroic history painting but the result is not a heightened sense of difference. Instead the painting's desultory 'yellowed' and 'dirtied' and 'sinister red' coagulated surface disturbingly conveys a cloying, even dismantling intimacy. In their compressed, irrational and spatially illogical accretion, these protagonists seem incestuously, sorrowfully enmeshed. Mixing may have been irresistibly desirable to Delacroix, but its pleasures could not be disengaged from a haunting sense of loss. Awaking from the purplish space of forgetfulness entailed its self-recriminations.

Delacroix's audience was even more uneasy. Critics, particularly philhellenes, were deeply troubled by the way the scene oddly combined a sated despondency and a wilful, even impetuous, incoherence. Here was a canvas curiously wedging painterly bravado and

models of Gros, Girodet and Géricault, the French past was imperial as much as it was revolutionary. French empire however, like Ottoman Empire, could in the 1820s be experienced as a belated enterprise whose long history had undermined as much as bolstered the boundaries between colonizer and colonized. Aspasie walked into Delacroix's studio as an incarnation of that colonial history of tremendous violence, seductive promise, repeated loss and prolonged intermingling. Emblem of empire, crucible of 'races', symptom of the century's increasingly racialized thinking, the mulatta offered the painter a potent resource for his art. Her strategic value resided in her capacity to signify race and empire without prescribing formulae by which to represent them. If the nineteenth century is understood as an epoch with progressive recourse to the hierarchical stability afforded by racial categories, painters like Gros and Delacroix during its first decades were most interested in the ways pictures could be made out of empire's contingency and 'extraneous mixture'.

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Notes

Aspects of this argument were presented as guest papers at a U.C. Berkeley Townsend Center Conference, March 1997; SUNY Stony Brook, April 1997; Rice University, February 1998, and CAA February 1998. I would like to thank members of those audiences for their stimulating comments, as well as readers T.J. Clark, Todd Olson, Jeannene Przybylski, Margaret Waller, editor Adrian Rifkin and excellent research assistant Heather Macdonald. This project has been funded by a J. Paul Getty Postdoctoral Fellowship, a University of California President's Research Fellowship in the Humanities, a Hellman Family Faculty Fund Fellowship, and grants from the University of California Committee on Research. For Nora, Neila, Betty and Rina, and for Gregoria Almallatgegui.

- 1 Lord Byron, *Don Juan*, Canto V, stanza 88, London, 1986, p. 241.
- 2 'Il y faut ce bon noir, cette heureuse saleté, et de ces membres comme je sais et comme peu les cherchent. Le mulâtre fera bien.' *Eugène Delacroix. Journal 1822–1863*, eds A. Joubin, H. Damisch and R. Labourdette, Paris, 1980, p. 78.
- 3 The most important recent discussions of Chios are: N. Athanassoglou-Kallmyer, *French Images from the Greek War of Independence, 1821–1830*, New Haven, 1989; E. Fraser, 'Uncivil Alliances: Delacroix, the Private Collector and the Public', *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 21, no. 1, 1998, pp. 87–103; as well as her 'Interpreting Delacroix in the 1820s: Readings in the Art Criticism and Politics of Restoration France', PhD dissertation, Yale University, 1993; F. Haskell, 'Chios, the Massacres and Delacroix,' in *Chios: A Conference at the Homereion in Chios, 1984*, eds J. Boardman and C. Vaphopoulou-Richardson, London, 1986, pp. 335–58; F. Trapp, *The Attainment of Delacroix*, Baltimore, 1971, pp. 29–48; L. Johnson, *The Paintings of Eugène Delacroix. A Critical Catalogue 1816–1831*, Oxford, 1981, vol. 1, pp. 83–91. Concerning pictorial representations of

the Greek War of Independence, see as well Musée des Beaux Arts, Bordeaux, *La Grèce en Révolte. Delacroix et les peintres français 1815–1848*, Paris, 1996. See also my forthcoming book entitled *Extremities in Paint. Embodying Empire in Post-Revolutionary France*.

- 4 See *Journal des Débats*, 30 August 1821, p. 3; *La Quotidienne*, 4 June 1821, p. 2. See also E. Malakis, *French travellers in Greece (1770–1820) an early phase of French Philhellenism*, Philadelphia, 1925, p. 12; D. Nicolaïdes, *D'une Grèce à l'autre. Représentation des Grecs modernes par la France révolutionnaire*, Paris, 1992, p. 27; A. Dimopoulos *L'opinion publique française et la révolution grecque (1821–1827)*, Nancy, 1962, pp. 60–1.

- 5 In contrast to N. Athanassoglou-Kallmyer's assertion that 'The modern Greeks were considered to be the direct progeny of their illustrious ancestors, from whom they had inherited, it was believed, not only physical likeness, costume, language, and habits, but also an intellectual and cultural potential', *French Images from the Greek War of Independence*, op. cit. (note 3), p. 25, Nicolaïdes stresses the

remarkable consistency of travel accounts' emphasis upon the degeneracy of Greek inhabitants, *D'une Grèce à l'autre*, p. 17. See also S. Moussa, 'Le Débat entre philhellènes et mishellènes chez les voyageurs français, de la fin du XVIII siècle au début du XIX siècle', *Revue de littérature comparée*, no. 4, 1994, pp. 411–34; Malakis, *French travellers in Greece*; C. Cinquin, 'Greece or the Experience of the Lost Signifier in PostRevolutionary France', *Symposium*, Fall 1989, pp. 158–70; and Dimopoulos, *L'opinion publique française et la révolution grecque*.

6 A. Grasset-Saint-Sauveur, *Voyage historique, littéraire et pittoresque dans les îles et possessions ci-devant Vénitaines du Levant*, Paris, an VIII (1800), vol. 2, p. 180; cited in Malakis, *French Travellers in Greece*, op. cit (note 5), pp. 45–6.

7 S. de Choiseul-Gouffier, *Discours préliminaire du voyage pittoresque de la Grèce*, Paris, 1783, p. 21.

8 'Z.' *Journal des Débats*, 30 August 1821, p. 4; see also for example, *Le Moniteur universel*, 26 August, 1821, p. 1235.

9 See D. Dakin, *The Greek Struggle for Independence, 1821–1833*, London, 1973, p. 9; Nicolaïdes, *D'une Grèce à l'autre*, op. cit (note 5), p. 25; R. Davison, 'Nationalism as an Ottoman Problem and the Ottoman Response,' in *Nationalism in a Non-National State: The Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire*, eds W.W. Haddad and W. Ochsewald, Columbus, Ohio, 1977, pp. 25–56. D. Holden, *Greece without Columns. The Making of Modern Greeks*, London, 1972, pp. 22–3.

10 Dakin, *The Greek Struggle for Independence*, op. cit. (note 9), p. 22; Davison, 'Nationalism as an Ottoman Problem,' pp. 25–56; Moussa, 'Le Débat entre philhellènes et mishellènes,' p. 414.

11 Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Canto II, stanza LVII, *The Poetical Works of Lord Byron*, New York, n.d., p. 22.

12 See Dimopoulos, *L'opinion publique française et la révolution grecque*, op. cit (note 4), pp. 36, 52. However, a few papers like the *Journal de Paris* which had earlier expressed philhellenic support, began in 1824, sometimes only temporarily, to convey serious reservations. See J. Dimakis, *La Guerre de l'indépendance grecque vue par la presse française (période de 1821–1824). Contribution à l'étude de l'opinion publique et du mouvement philhellénique en France*, Thessalonique, Institute for Balkan Studies, 1968, pp. 156–7.

13 'L'Amateur sans prétention', *Le Mercure du dix-neuvième siècle*, vol. 7, 1824, p. 204; see also *La Semaine*, vol. 1, 1824, p. 75; *Le Courrier français*, 9 September 1824, p. 3; A. Jal, *L'Artiste et le philosophe*, Paris, 1824, p. 51; *Journal des Débats*, 5 October, 1824, p. 4; *Le Constitutionnel*, 30 August 1824, p. 3.

14 *Le Diable Boiteux*, no. 247, 3 September, 1824, p. 3.

15 See J.-J. Rousseau, *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes*, Paris, 1965, pp. 19–20.

16 Savary, *Lettres sur la Grèce pour servir de suite à celles sur l'Egypte*, Paris, 1801 (1st edn 1784–9), Letter 32, pp. 283–4, and also p. 86. Savary is cited by Delacroix in his journal on 4 May 1824; Joubin et al, *Eugène Delacroix. Journal*, op. cit (note 2), p. 75.

17 *ibid.*, 12 January 1824, p. 46.

18 M. Aycard and F. Flocon, *Salon de 1824*, Paris, 1824, pp. 11–12.

19 See, for example, *Le Globe*, 28 September 1824, p. 27: 'Tout le monde sans exception, a pris ce massacre pour une peste.' *La Quotidienne*, 12 September, 1824, p. 4; *L'Oriflamme*, no. 1, 1824, p. 346.

20 See *Le Mercure du dix-neuvième siècle*, no. 7, 1824, p. 202. See also *Le Masque de Fer, journal épistolaire*, no. 1, 1825, p. 62; *Journal de Paris*, 9 October 1824, p. 3. Charles Blanc later asserted that Delacroix's Chios was in fact conceived 'under the influence of the *Plague of Jaffa*'; 'Eugène Delacroix', in *Gazette des beaux-arts*, no. 16 (1864), pp. 5–27. Scholars have pointed out that in fact plague broke out on the island of Chios only a month after the massacre. However, critics did not discuss Delacroix's scene as an actual aftermath of the event, but as an inappropriate art-historical choice. See Johnson, *The Paintings of Eugène Delacroix*, op. cit (note 3), vol. 1, pp. 86–7; and Haskell, 'Chios, the Massacres, and Delacroix', op. cit. (note 3), pp. 355–6. Concerning Gros's painting, see my article 'Rumor, Contagion and Colonization in Gros's *Plague-Stricken of Jaffa (1804)*', *Representations*, no. 51, Summer 1995, pp. 1–46.

21 E. Fraser has astutely analysed the ways critics interpreted Delacroix's choice to foreground the sensual body of the female nude in a scene of repugnant victimization; 'Interpreting Delacroix in the 1820s', op. cit. (note 3), pp. 65–89.

22 Concerning Géricault's *Raft of the Medusa*, see *Eugène Delacroix. Journal*, op. cit (note 3), 1 April 1824, p. 59; about Girodet's *Revolt of Cairo*, see 11 April 1824, p. 63; see repeated references to Gros on 27 February 1824, p. 52; and an adulatory reference probably concerning *Jaffa* specifically on 9 June 1824, p. 86. Such expressions of admiration do not preclude the young artist's competitive and critical relationships to these artists' work; see for example, his dissatisfaction with aspects of Gros's style on 9 June 1824; and his later scathing critique, possibly from 1829, of Girodet's treatment of other races in the *Revolt*, *ibid.*, p. 815.

23 *Eugène Delacroix. Journal*, op. cit (note 2), 19 and 20 April 1824, pp. 68–9. On 11 May 1824, p. 79, Delacroix wrote 'The life of Napoleon is the epic theme of our century in all the arts.'

About Gros, see 27 February 1824, p. 52, as well as 10 May 1824, *ibid.*, p. 79. See also Delacroix's letter to Félix Guillemandet, 1 December 1823, in *Eugène Delacroix. Selected Letters 1813–1863*, ed. J. Stewart, New York, 1970, p. 116.

24 *Eugène Delacroix. Journal*, op. cit. (note 2), 1 May 1824, p. 74.

25 See N. Athanassoglou-Kallmyer, 'Imago Belli: Horace Vernet's *L'Atelier* as an Image of Radical Militarism under the Restoration', *Art Bulletin*, vol. 68, no. 2, June 1986, pp. 268–80.

26 7 May 1824, Joubin et al, *Eugène Delacroix. Journal*, op. cit. (note 2), p. 78. See also Delacroix's conflation of real and represented bodies in his powerfully somatic response to Géricault's death, *ibid.*, 1 April 1824, p. 59.

27 *ibid.*, 12 January 1824, p. 46.

28 In his letter to his friend Félix Guillemandet on 1 December 1823, Delacroix asserted he needed to 'withdraw' from intercourse with women in order to cover the 'virgin' canvas of *Chios*; *Eugène Delacroix. Lettres intimes*, ed. A. Dupont, Paris, 1954, p. 148.

29 Joubin et al, *Eugène Delacroix. Journal*, op. cit. (note 2), 25 January 1824, p. 49.

30 *ibid.*, 1 June 1824, p. 84; see also 7 April 1824, p. 61: 'Ce matin Hélène est venue. O disgrâce ... Je n'ai pu.' And 15 April 1823, pp. 35–6.

31 R. Escholier claims Delacroix met this model through Auguste and that she was in great demand among artists of the period; *Delacroix et les femmes*, Paris, 1963, p. 67.

32 *Eugène Delacroix. Journal*, op. cit. (note 2), 1 April 1857, p. 657, and 4 October 1857, p. 679.

33 *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam*, eds R. and S. Price, Baltimore and London, 1988 (1790) manuscript; a version was published in 1796.

34 *Eugène Delacroix. Journal*, op. cit. (note 2), 28 May 1824, p. 83; 'Ieri anche un'altra con la nera.' In an 1821 sketchbook, Delacroix listed among his models, 'Stéline, nègresse'. Johnson, *The Paintings of Eugène Delacroix*, op. cit. (note 3), vol. 1, p. 82.

35 J.A. Riquetti, bailli de Mirabeau, cited in C. Duchet, 'Esclavage et préjugé de couleur', in *Racisme et société*, eds P. de Comarmond et C. Duchet, Paris, 1969, p. 126.

36 L. Hoffmann, *Le nègre romantique*, Paris, 1973, p. 233. This is not to say that the liaisons between white women and black or 'mixed-blood' men never occurred, nor were they neglected in literature. However, such stories were typically cast as tragic love stories in which the black or 'mixed-blood' man suffered from the impossibility of fulfilment.

37 For instance, Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Description topographique, physique, civile, politique et historique de la partie française de l'île Saint-Domingue*, eds B. Maurel and E. Taillemite, Paris, 1958 (1st ed. 1797–8), vol. 1, p. 107.

38 J.-J. Virey, *Histoire naturelle du genre humain*, Paris, 3rd edn, 1834 (1st edn, 1801), vol. 2, p. 126.

39 F. Carteau, *Soirées Bermudianes ou Entretiens sur les événemens qui ont opéré la ruine de la parties française de l'île Saint-Domingue*, Paris, 1801, p. 153.

40 Among them, Texier, *Les colons des toutes couleurs, histoire d'un établissement nouveau à la côté de Guinée*, Paris, 1798; Emilie J ... T ..., *Zorada ou la Créole*, Paris, 1801; Ducray-Dumenil, *Elmonde*, Paris, 1805; Cornillon, *Odes*, Paris, 1806; Mme Daminois, *Lydie, ou la Créole*, Paris, 1824. See L. Hoffmann, *Le nègre romantique*, op. cit. (note 36), pp. 135–8, 229–51. Also see W. Sollors, *Neither Black nor White Yet Both. Thematic Explorations of Interracial Literature*, Oxford, 1997, esp. pp. 112–141.

41 The general currency of Moreau's text is attested by Victor Hugo's explicit citations of its racial classifications in the second 1826 version of *Bug-Jargal* but Moreau's hyperbole concerning the mulatta's amorous prowess was also influential; see, for example, S. J. Ducoeurjoly, *Manuel des habitants de Saint Domingue*, Paris, 1802, pp. cxxxvij–cxxxvij.

42 *Description ... de l'île Saint-Domingue*, op. cit. (note 37), vol. 1, p. 104.

43 Commenting upon Byron's deformity, Delacroix admitted: 'For a long time I considered myself disgraced in several respects. My thinness, my yellow complexion, my apparent weakness, even the shape of my nose. Today I laugh to think of it.' A. Piron, *Eugène Delacroix, sa vie et ses œuvres*, Paris, 1865, p. 441; cited in Spector, 'Delacroix: A Study of the Artist's Personality and Its Relation to His Art', in *Psycho-Analytic Perspectives on Art*, ed. M.M. Gedo, Hillsdale, N.J., 1985, p. 29.

44 Besides a sexual liaison after Géricault's death with one of his sexual partners, Marie-Aubry, Delacroix had an affair with his friend Soulier's mistress, 'J'; his journal conveys both his competitiveness and his fascination with their triadic intimacy: 'Un partage!' 15 April 1823, p. 35; and 'Pensez-vous que je vivrai avec cet homme, si je me mets à vous aimer...?' , p. 37. Concerning Marie-Aubry, see Escholier, *Delacroix et les femmes*, op. cit. (note 31), p. 64. Spector has discussed what he calls the 'homosexual intimacy' of some of Delacroix's male friendships, 'Delacroix: A Study', op. cit. (note 43), pp. 31–3.

45 20 October 1820, *Correspondance générale d'Eugène Delacroix*, ed. A. Joubin, Paris, 1935, vol. 1, p. 91; cited in Spector, 'Delacroix: A Study', op. cit. (note 43), p. 61.

46 Regarding French conceptions of miscegenation during this period, see P. Crépau, *Classifications raciales populaires et métissage: essai d'anthropologie cognitive*, Montreal, 1973, esp. pp. 9–18; M. Duchet, 'Du noir au blanc, ou la cinquième génération', in *Le couple interdit: entretiens sur le racisme. Le dialectique de*

l'altérité socio-culturelle et la sexualité, ed. L. Poliakov, Paris, 1977, pp. 177–90; A. Gautier, *Les soeurs de Solitude. La condition féminine dans l'esclavage aux Antilles du XVII au XIX siècle*, Paris, 1985, pp. 151–81; Sollors, *Neither Black nor White Yet Both*, op. cit. (note 40), pp. 112–41.

47 P.-V. Malouet, *Mémoire sur l'esclavage des nègres. Dans lequel on discute les motifs proposés pour leur affranchissement, ceux qui s'y opposent, & les moyens praticables pour améliorer leur sort*, Paris, 1755, p. 40. Cited in P. Bouillé, 'In Defense of Slavery. Origins of a Racist Ideology in France', in *History from Below: Studies in Popular Protest and Popular Ideology in Honour of George Rudé*, ed. F. Krantz, Montreal, 1985, p. 227. See also S. Peabody, 'There are No Slaves in France.' *The Political Culture of Race and Slavery in the Ancien Régime*, Oxford, 1996, pp. 72–87.

48 L.N. Baudry-Deslozières, *Les Egaremens du nigrophilisme*, Paris, 1802, p. 29. Even the anti-slavery spokesperson, Abbé Raynal, described black blood as 'one of the yeasts which alter, corrupt and destroy our population'. Cited in Bouillé, 'In Defense of Slavery', op. cit. (note 47), p. 225.

49 Peyroux de la Coudrenière, *Mémoire sur les sept espèces d'hommes et sur les causes des altérations de ces espèces*, Paris, 1814, pp. 45–6.

50 See Sollors's discussion of the competing sterility and fertility or 'hybrid vigour' theses, *Neither Black nor White yet both*, op. cit. (note 40), pp. 129–35. While Sollors argues Moreau de Saint-Méry was a proponent of the fertility thesis, Moreau was in fact more ambivalent. Like Virey, he described the beauty and vigour of individual mixed-blood persons, but also implied they were incapable of sustaining their population, see especially, *Description ... de l'isle Saint-Domingue*, op. cit. (note 37), vol. 1, p. 108.

51 *Histoire naturelle du genre humain*, op. cit. (note 38), vol. 2, p. 133.

52 P. Girard, 'Le Mulâtre littéraire ou le passage au blanc', in *Le couple interdit: entretiens sur le racisme*, ed. L. Poliakov, Paris, 1977, pp. 191–213; cited p. 208.

53 A. Métral, *Histoire de l'expédition des Français à Saint-Domingue sous le Consulat de Napoléon Bonaparte*, Paris, 1825, p. 17.

54 Among texts describing *sang-mêlés* as yellow: Carteau, *Soirées Bermudianes*, pp. 123, 152; Anonymous, *Cri des Colons contre un ouvrage de m. l'Eveque et Sénateur Grégoire, ayant pour titre de la Littérature des Nègres...* Paris, 1810, pp. 182–3. Mulattos were frequently described as 'red' even in official documents and were also superimposed upon the red portion of the tricolour flag presented to the National Convention by men of colour during the Revolution, see L. Dubois, *Les Esclaves de la République. L'histoire oubliée de la première émancipation 1789–1794*, Paris, 1998, pp. 159–60; and also J.M.C. Américain, *Précis des gémissements des sang-mêlés dans les colonies françaises, par J.M.C. Américain, Sang-mêlé*, Paris, 1789, p. 8, who describes their skin as 'red, white or half-tint'.

55 E. Saks, 'Representing Miscegenation Law', *Raritan*, vol. 8, no. 2, Fall 1988, pp. 39–68.

56 *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam*, op. cit. (note 33), pp. 87–8; cited in Sollors, *Neither Black nor White yet both*, op. cit. (note 40), p. 191.

57 A. Hamelin, *Mémoires*, cited in M. Lescure, *Madame Hamelin. Merveilleuse et turbulente Fortunée (1776–1851)*, Paris, 1995, p. 20.

58 C. Clary-et-Aldringen, in a letter to his sister 23 April 1810, ibid., p. 61; Comtesse Divoff, wife of a Russian diplomat during Consulate, cited in ibid., p. 60; a contemporary describing her at a post-Thermidor soirée, ibid., p. 48; G. Touchard-Lafosse, ibid., p. 58

59 'Angélique', *Odes*, Paris, 1806, p. 64; cited in Hoffman, *Le Nègre romantique*, op. cit. (note 36), p. 138.

60 *Histoire naturelle du genre humain*, op. cit. (note 38), vol. 2, p. 130.

61 A song circulating Martinique in 1815 and recounted in an 1818 voyage account linked the mulatta to dangerous secrecy but positioned her as a poisonous conspirator; mulattas were consistently configured as manipulators of white men's desire. De Montlezun, *Souvenirs des Antilles, voyage en 1815 et 1816 aux Etats-Unis et dans l'archipel Caraïbe*, Paris, 1818, p. 399. Cited in Gautier, *Les soeurs de Solitude*, op. cit. (note 45), p. 161.

62 *Neither Black nor White Yet Both*, op. cit. (note 40).

63 'L'Amateur sans prétention', *Le Mercure du dix-neuvième siècle*, no. 7, 1824, pp. 199–200.

64 28 September 1824, p. 28.

65 30 August 1824, pp. 3–4.

66 no. 1, 1824, p. 346.

67 F. Pillet, *Une Matinée au salon ou les peintres de l'école passés en revue, critique des tableaux et sculptures de l'exposition de 1824*, Paris, 1824, p. 25.

68 no. 1, Paris, 1824, p. 130.

69 *Le Constitutionnel*, *Le Globe*, *Le Mercure du Dix-Neuvième Siècle*, *Le Drapeau Blanc*, *Le Courrier français*, *Le Journal des Débats*. See Dimakis, *La Guerre de l'indépendance grecque*, op. cit. (note 12), esp. pp. 121–164.

70 O. Voutier, *Mémoires du colonel Voutier sur la guerre actuelle des Grecs ...*, Paris, 1823, pp. 14–18.

71 Eugène Delacroix, *Journal*, op. cit. (note 2), 7 May 1824, p. 78. '... Il faut remplir. Si c'est moins naturel, ce sera plus fécond et plus beau.'